

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 57

By McCormick

A RESOLUTION to ensure equal access to technology and information for Tennesseans with disabilities.

WHEREAS, an estimated 1,053,000 Tennessee citizens have a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities; and

WHEREAS, the rights of people with disabilities are protected by federal laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights (DD Act), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and guarded also by state and local authorities; and

WHEREAS, the convergence of computing and communication technologies has substantially altered how many people acquire, utilize, and disseminate knowledge and information; and

WHEREAS, access to understandable information and usable communication technologies is necessary for all people in our society, particularly for people with disabilities, to promote self-determination and engage meaningfully in major aspects of life, such as education, health promotion, employment, recreation, and civic participation; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of people with disabilities have limited or no access to understandable information and usable communication technologies; and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities must have access to commercially available devices and software that incorporate principles of universal design, including flexibility and ease of use for all; and

WHEREAS, the accessibility of technology and information for people with disabilities must be guided by standards and best practices, such as personalization and compatibility

across devices and platforms, and through the application of innovations, including automated and predictive technologies; and

WHEREAS, enhanced public and private funding is necessary to allow people with disabilities to utilize technology and access information as a natural consequence of their rights to inclusion in our society; and

WHEREAS, ensuring access to technology and information for Tennesseans with disabilities will create new markets and employment opportunities, decrease dependency on public services, and improve the independence, productivity, and quality of life of people with disabilities; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby affirm our commitment to equal rights for people with disabilities to technology and information access, and call for implementation of these rights with deliberate speed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.